

Message Text

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47

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /096 W

----- 015708

R 061640Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6704

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 2994

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, SS, MR, ML

SUBJECT: SAHARA AFTERMATH: POLISARIO INCURSIONS CONTINUE

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 2821

1. POLISARIO FORCE OF TWELVE LANDROVERS SPENT MOST OF
DECEMBER 2 CAMPED EIGHT KILOMETERS NTSIDE ATAR
CELEBRATING 'IID AL-ADHA WITH TRADITIONAL ROAST SHEEP.
FORCE MADE NO ATTEMPT TO ATTACK OR EVEN MAKE ITS
PRESENCE KNOWN TO MID-NORTH CITY WHICH HOUSES BRAND
NEW COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS SCHOOL
(WITH ITS FRENCH AND MOROCCAN MILITARY INSTRUCTORS).
ACCORDING TO FRENCH BUSINESSMAN WHO IS LONG TIME
RESIDENT OF DESERT EXPANSE NOW CALLED MAURITANIA AND
WHOSE PAST HISTORY GIVES HIM READY ACCESS TO
INNERMOST CIRCLES OF MAURITANIAN MILITARY AND
SECURITY FORCES, POLISARIO FORCE WAS NOT DISCOVERED
UNTIL TWO GIRM SOLDIERS STUMBLED ONTO
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ENCAMPMENT. ONE MANAGED SUBSEQUENTLY TO

ESCAPE, MAKE HIS WAY BACK TO ATAR, AND INFORM GOVERNOR. HASTILY SCRAMBLED GIRM FORCE FOUND DESERTED CAMPSITE, AND UNSUCCESSFULLY FOLLOWED VEHICLE TRACKS UNTIL NIGHTFALL. POLISARIO FORCE HAD VANISHED INTO DESERT, APPARENTLY TAKING SECOND SOLDIER WITH THEM.

2. SINCE SIXTY-MAN (ESTIMATED) POLISARIO FORCE ALMOST CERTAINLY DID NOT DRIVE 750 KILOMETERS FOR BUCOLIC IDYL IN HILLS ABOVE ATAR, IID-ENFORCED "CEASEFIRE" WOULD IN ALL PROBABILITY HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY AFTER MIDNIGHT MORTAR OR BAZOOKA ATTACK. WHATEVER TRUE OPERATIONAL INTENTIONS OF POLISARIO FORCE MAY HAVE BEEN, ITS VERY PRESENCE OUTSIDE ATAR ONCE AGAIN DEMONSTRATED POLISARIO'S ABILITY TO RANGE VIRTUALLY AT WILL ENTIRE NORTHEAST QUADRANT OF MAURITANIA.

HANDYSIDE

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